4201 Peachtree Place, Alexandria, VA 22304 July 12, 1991

Dear Harold,

I have really enjoyed your letter of 6/25/91 and will use it as the format for this reply. I hope it is true that your John Hopkins trip has obviated the idea of surgery. I don't ever want to see a surgeon again, and there are a rare few doctors I want to see again.

I had back surgery in Feb last year to correct an old Korean War period injury. It was not the usual "Back" problem. The surgery was 100% successful. I went in with a crutch, and came out walking. Then last fall I walked right back in an had a triple by-pass coronary deal. It went fairly well (it's the most brutal operation in the world); but in the process I was injured by the life support equipment and for four months no one could figure out what the matter was. Finally a Dr at George Washington Univ Hospital diagnosed the error, and has fixed it temporarily.

Then with the heart surgery I was given a Digitalis pill, Digoxin, and the side effects were terrible. A few weeks ago they agreed to take me off that, and I feel quite well...weak, but well. In one month I'll find if my heart does all right without that damn pill. So there it is.

It makes it hard to get work done because I have so much less time/energy for work.

Say...I got a hell of a kick about your Chopper story. I'm against the darn things anyway. Man was not born to fly on an engine. I don't mind flying on a wing; but not an engine.

One fine day Lansdale and I were going up to Ft Detrick in a big chopper and the thing went dead right over Hwy 270. We made a quick landing in the middle of all the cars. All came out OK. That was my last ride in those things.

When I taught at Yale in the Forties one of my students was Igor Sikorski JR the son of the great Igor who invented the helicopter. More importantly he was the man who designed that beautiful PanAM Clipper of the pre-WW II days. It pioneered the Trans-Pacific service when Juan Trippe ran that great airline. Today we read that Delta is buying out PanAM. That ought to make Trippe, the Kristofferson brothers, George Kraigher and all the other airline "Saints" spin in their graves.

I was with Sikorski one day when he was trying his new helicopter on one of its very first flights. He could not tell ahead of time how much each individual blade would twist every time it went around (3 blades); so he carried a wrench and kept adjusting them with each little flight. Finally he got them balanced and he flew the thing about one yard off the ground across a field and back. He was crowing like a rooster.

And that brings me back to birds. I love your bird story. If I had known you earlier I would have gone in the bird business with you. I grew up in a big park and we had three Rhode Island Red hens, several bantams and a big Rhode Island Red rooster. They never knew a cage or a pen. They could fly into trees like

turkeys, and I have seen that huge rooster chase a dog. And the eggs. My mother would send us down to see if there were any eggs and we'd hunt around until we found a few. Huge eggs that would not fit in a box. That's all I know about birds; but on your next flock just whistle. I've always wanted birds. All I have now are about five half-tame crows.

You knew the Dulles family socially. I only knew them on business. They were some characters. They knew what made the world go round.

Thanks for the tip on walking. It is my favorite. In fact my dog and I have just come in from a long neighborhood walk despite the fact it is drizzling. Also, one neighbor saved a big, 22" to 24" inch diameter oak tree trunk for me. I have been going there and with wedges and mallet have been breaking them into quarters. I can move the quarter. I can't budge the whole thing. Then I push them home in my garden cart...part way up hill and stack them for winter. When it is cooler I'll finish the splitting job. I got a cord of good oak wood two days ago and I am gradually moving it from the driveway to a neat stack along the side of the back yard. I like to keep busy with work...not calesthenics. And a lot of walking. Also I have a "Bike" machine on the patio.

My brother, one year my junior, has had plastic arteries in both legs for about 20 years. He walks around the golf course every single day. It saves him. He does all right; but he must walk.

I agree heartily with your assessment of Beschloss. I have read little of his work and will not read more. He is one these guys who is in the agency's hands and on their payroll. About the matter you mentioned. I believe that he is wrong about the "disposal" problem. We had taken care of that earlier by having the "unfit" stationed at that camp at Lake Pontchartrain near New Orleans. That is why so many bad-mouthing JFK misfits were in the New Orleans area. We intended to have them there, and to leave them. As far as I can recall the guys at the big camp in Guatemala were the good guys. I had loads of my people down there as instructors for the flight training. Howard Hunt, the CIA's "Political" officer showed up there one day and they threw him out.

Of course Beschloss wouldn't know anyhow. There was nothing wrong with the Bay of Pigs tactical plan that having McGeorge Bundy out of town would not have been successful. It was a good plan BUT it depended upon having every last one of Castro's combat aircraft destroyed on the ground first. Bundy screwed that...and the entire operation. Does Beschloss say that? Does he know it?

You are certainly right about the dishonesty in books. I just attended the 3-day annual convention of the Society of Historians for American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) and I never heard so many bad books being discussed. The problem is that the government will not release the true facts for 30 years and by then generations have read the bad books...and believed them. Gresham's law.

Re the Russian missiles in Cuba in Oct 1962. I was on the Joint Staff in those days. I was the guy the Chairman sent to the Strike Commander, Gen Adams in Tampa and to the Naval Commander

in Norfolk with the personal command messages. I was very much in the middle of that thing. My boss would go to the White House more than once a day with pictures to show JFK. I would see them before he went. I was convinced then, and believe it now...that all we saw was the tarp and not the missiles. We never saw nose cones because they would not have been inserted until the missiles were ready. We had U-2's doing top cover and we had those wonderful Navy RCN jets going over at 50 or 100 feet...yes! 50 or 100 feet with that camera that stays open and is timed to the speed. We had great photography that has never been revealed. We saw no actual missiles. Anyone can make a box with a tarp over it look like a missile. From what I recall we did not see roads big enough for those big missile trucks. I hope my memory is still working; but that what I recall and I was in the thick of it.

July 14th

Got interrupted by a visit from my son and his wife. They live in Laurel and get over here frequently.

Now to NSAM 263...It's a big story; but it contains the heavy pressures of the period including the climactic last 90-day period. NSAM 263 was not the whole story. It was the end, the climax of what began in Nov 1960. When JFK was elected by that slim margin he upset the plans of the Eisenhower crowd who were sure Nixon could make it.

Ike wanted to leave on a budget surplus; so they put big projects like the TFX fighter aircraft (about $6.5 billion) on hold for the Nixon administration to spend. JFK won and inherited that and other money like that. He and Goldberg figured a way to get the most political mileage out of that money by requiring the bidders to say where they were going to have the planes build, in what counties, etc. This gave JFK the ability to pin-point where the big money would go for political purposes. That burned up the Mil/Indus guys.

Then he had Gilpatric going around the country making speeches about the rest of the Defense dollars. That bothered his old banking buddies.

((Talk about banking friends, have you ever heard of this?

> Eugene Meyer, head of the War Finance Corporation, WW I was one of the wealthiest men in the country. He bought the Washington POST. His daughter is Katherine Graham. As we know the POST was most instrumental in getting rid of Nixon; but have you ever heard the Kennedy connection?
>
> After his WW I stint with the War Finance Corp he made so much money he was able to purchase Allied Chemical Corp, the Post and other properties. Meyer's family banking house was Lazard Brothers and it is LAZARD FRERES THAT MANAGES THE FORTUNES OF MANY OF OUR POLITICAL LUMINARIES, INCLUDING THE JOSEPH KENNEDY FAMILY FORTUNE.

Think that one over carefully. If the Kennedy wealth is managed by Lazard that includes the POST...that opens a lot of questions.))

JFK had his Comptroller (Saxon) opening the doors wide for new, small, local banks. That got the big bankers mad.

Then after the Bay of Pigs he had Gen Taylor, Adm Burke, Allen Dulles and Bobby [the oddest group ever assembled] study that failure carefully (Came up with the answer that McGeorge Bundy caused the failure.) and then to come up with a future plan how the Gov't would run Covert Operations. When their work was done, they had Gen Taylor write it all up in a "Letter to the President", June 13, 1961. (This was highly classified; but I have had the whole thing for years.) This was a most important work that the historians have ignored, haven't found, or don't want to find.

Directly from that Letter, JFK issued three most important directives: NSAM 55, 56 and 57. These would take the CIA out of the business. Obviously they started a hell of an inside fight that kept simmering on through 1962. JFK finally decided that he would not settle that issue until after he was re-elected in 1964.

At the same time he had decided that he would get us out of Vietnam. From 1945 to 1965 the CIA ran our activity in Vietnam; so this further burned the agency and its allies in the big business world, who wanted that easy $500 billion.

Through 1963 JFK planned this move and he planned to make his announcement that he was getting out the #1 plank in his re-election platform. All summer, 1963, he worked with a strong team on the directive he would issue. He sent my boss Gen Krulak to Vietnam to get completely up to date there. Krulak came back by way of CINCPAC and spent a lot of time with ADM Felt and the others there. They had strong feelings about what the CIA was doing in Vietnam and they let Krulak know that.

He attended meetings in the White House almost daily after his return as they worked up this big paper. Krulak sent me to CINCPAC, in Sept 1963, to spend a week with ADM Felt and his people. I came back and we had a huge document underway in our offices in the Joint Staff. Then Kennedy sent McNamara and Taylor to Vietnam for show. We finished the big document and got it approved at the White House and then had it flown to Hawaii in a jet and gave it to McNamara and Taylor so they could read it as they flew back. They gave it to JFK. Of course he knew every word of it. He had all but dictated every word of it.

Then JFK made a big deal of making much of that proposal into a White house directive NSAM 263. You see, NSAM 263 is really an outgrowth of NSAM 55 of the Taylor Letter days, July 1961. It said we'd take 1,000 men home by Christmas and most importantly it said he would have all Americans out by the end of 1965. This was his political plank. It made immediate headlines. It shocked the Pentagon. It shocked Washington and the business world. JFK was in it for real. Diem was dead and JFK had put his chips on Gen Big Minh to get Vietnam squared away. Minh was a Buddhist.

His speeches of the 1963 period including the Trade Mart speech tell his story. Then all hell began to break loose. You could see it in the halls of the Pentagon where I was for 11 years. It was rough and dirty and JFK was the target of everything.

Then in a strange act they sent me to the South Pole, the Cabinet went to Honolulu, the military Protection Unit was called off and even the Secret Service was not on duty as required. When all Protection is down anyone can be killed...easily, as he was.

So NSAM 263 was the climax; but it was not alone. I have been saying this for more than twenty years now and I have been pleased to see how many who never thought of such things before in connection with the assassination are realizing that the "Why?" had to be the big story. NSAM 263 was as close to a "WHY" as you can get. So that's my story.

You are absolutely correct about the Latin American tyrants being trained here. It goes farther than that. We have trained tens of thousands of selected "Tyrants and Terrorists", Libyans, Iranians, Iraquis, etc. from all over the world here in special camps. That is where most of these guys come from. They don't learn that kind of stuff at home. Just think of the Latin American Police Academy alone.

I'm am surprised that you have given up on the idea of tracking the "cui bono" side of the story. To me, just watching the developments after Nov 22nd I'd say "cui bono" was the biggest thing going. The Vietnam War cost us no less than $500 billion. More than 10,000,000 men were flown to Saigon by commercial air during that war. More than 5,000 helicopters were destroyed there and later replaced at a higher cost. My God! That kind of money would buy a few bullets for anyone. On top of that, the coup d'etat of the JFK murder gave us LBJ, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan and King George. Just think what this has cost us in money and in the way of life.

Your letter returns to the Oct 62 "missiles" deal. I doubt I ever said, or even inferred that there were missiles in Cuba. I have always known that they were not there...just tarps over some big frames. They would not have been worth anything there.

Also JFK did amass an enormous military force in Florida ready for a potential invasion. I was right there and spoke with the commanding general, Paul Adams. McDill AF Base in Tampa was absolultely submerged in aircraft and troops in tents. We could have cleaned out Cuba quickly; but JFK decided not to. He was right. What the CIA was trying to tell JFK and the General was how many Cubans they could get to rise against Castro if we attacked. That is the same line they told JFK before the Bay of Pigs deal. They were wrong then too.

You will find in the Gravel Edition of the Pentagon Papers plenty of material about the plans that had been drawn up for covert attacks on North Vietnam. They began in the summer of 1963. Gen Krulak was in charge of that, and the originals had come from Adm Felt in Hawaii. Later LBJ authorized their use in NSAM 288 and they led directly to the response by the North Vietnamese that is now called the attack in the Tonkin Gulf...it was response.

To get the whole picture of those events you have to go back to 1954 and the creation of the Saigon Military Mission by the CIA and the covert work in the north under Lansdale and Conein. It is a hell of a story and it continued all the way along to the

Tonkin Attack period. The SMM had more to do with the creation of the real war in Vietnam than anything else.

July 15th

Back at it again. Just finished my walk with the dog, breakfast and some outside work. It's a beautiful day. Now, on your page 5 you have gone back to the Bay of Pigs. Yes, JFK did not make the final decision until about 3:30 P.M. on Sunday April 16th. They landed on Monday at dawn.

You cite Beschloss saying that "Dulles told JFK the night before that they had this problem...armed and angry Cubans in Guatemala." That is pure bullshit. Dulles was not even in the USA on the night before. He had laft the country for the weekend!

As for the Cubans in Guatemala...all the Cubans in Guatemala had been put to sea long before that Saturday night. It was the Cubans at Pontchartrain who were the trouble; and they were at sea also but we left them out there and did not have them land. This Beschloss stuff is all messed up. Of course, he and the CIA want to blame JFK for everything. You go back to Haynes Johnson and the others about "the plan that could not work." They just never bothered to ask the US Marines who had worked up the plan what it was. It would have worked.

First of all, the plan was based on the elimination of all of Castro's combat capable aircraft BEFORE the brigade landed on the beach. The Saturday, April 15th attack got 7 out of the 10. Three jet T-33's had gone to an airport near Santiago. The U-2 found them. Kennedy approved the plan Sunday for four special B-26 bombers to wipe them out, on the ground, just before dawn on Monday from the Puerto Cabezas airfield in Nicaragua.

That damn fool McGeorge Bundy called Gen Cabell at 9:30 P.M. Sunday saying that the strike was cancelled. With Dulles out of the country, Cabell was not dominant enough to over-rule Bundy, and the jets were not hit. Those jets turned the tide. Had they been destroyed as JFK ordered the Brigade would have won, easily. I have that whole story in writing in the words of Taylor, Burke, Dulles and Bobby. You can't beat that authority...plus the fact that the CIA Commander in Nicaragua that night called me from there begging me to help circumvent that stupid Bundy call. I was up to the minute on what was going on.

You are confusing two stories when you talk about the planes that were "one hour late." Some writer dreamed that up later. He did not know the facts and wrote his own imagined account. "One hour later" had nothing to do with the B-26 attack. When that CIA agent called me I could hear the engines running. They knew when to go and were ready...except for Bundy and Cabell's lack of guts. The inclusion of the US Navy in the story is fiction also. The plan never called for the Navy or for any US troops in support of the invasion. JFK had made that clear. With the Marine tactical plan they were not needed. If ALL of Castro's planes had been destroyed why would Navy planes be needed. (Did you know that Bundy wrote a New York Times OpED piece one day entitled "The Brigade's My Fault?")

If you want the best account of "How to beat Ho Chi Minh" you ought to read the pertinent one small chapter in General Krulak's

fine book "First to Fight." He was Commanding General FLEET MARINE FORCE PACIFIC and he tells it like it was. I knew Gen Creighton Abrams too. We are from the same home town. He was the first officer I reported to for active duty in July 1941. He was the Commander of Patton's lead Brigade of the Third Army. Abrams wanted orders from LBJ to go to Hanoi. He knew he could do it. Our Generals were not permitted to organize and fight to Hanoi. I have come to believe that we were in Indochina for MONEY and to wipe out the people, i.e. GENOCIDE. That's part of the New World Order as ordained by the Great God Malthus and his Archangel Charles Darwin. In such wars the Fittest will survive.

Re your rationalization of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, if they were there? All meaningful missiles by 1962 carried megaton warheads. Therefore, what is the difference between a missile with a megaton warhead and based in Cuba, a missile with equivalent warhead neatly packed into the trunk of a BMW and parked in an underground lot on K Street in downtown DC with a telephone beeper on it to detonate it simply, a missile with the same warhead based on a submarine off the US coast, or a missile with the same warhead launched from the heartland of the USSR? The difference, at most, is a few minutes. So, if Nikita wanted to play power politics all he had to do was call JFK and say, "Have your choice. I have missiles ready to go, and I intend to use them in a few minutes unless you do this.....!!"

All JFK would have to say is, "Nikita, thanks for the call. I have just pushed the bottons and all of our missiles are on the way. Good luck." I believe all these "October Missile Crisis" stories have been contrived and fanticised. I have been to our Nuclear schools. I went to the unequalled special course at RAND in 1959...i.e. the Post-Sputnik course. I was the student Missile Commander for the Armed Forces Staff College, ie. JCS "Master War Game" in 1955. I have learned about all you can do with missiles, and I wrote the first "Rocket and Missile" College-level text book for Air Force ROTC. Now that we have megatons on ICBMs the playing field is level. The choices are simple: "Use them and die, everyone dies, Earth dies: or stay smart." The great danger is that some mad man will fire them anyhow...sayonara to everyone and EARTH.

Yes, I have heard the Navy "Fishing Boat" story. The biggest game in town was MONGOOSE. Among other things it ended up providing all the cover, and cover mechanisms that were necessary for the assassination of JFK.

Thanks for your letter. It's fun going over "History???" with an old Buzzard who has been there also. Good luck to you and keep up the fight. If you have the opportunity would you kindly send me the address of David Wrone. I know its Stevens Point but I have misplaced the rest.

Ciao,

Fletch

L. Fletcher Prouty